arms of—of whom?—Maggie Hicks! Not the notorious Maggie Hicks?—Nonsense, man, you don't know Mr. Fetherell. You poor fool, you've got the wrong man.—Positive identification, eh? Humph! What is it?—Letters in his pockets and addressed to him? His coat was found on the floor unburned, eh? It's all a terrible, a silly mistake, I say. Don't in heaven's name let the newspapers get it.—What! the reporters have it already. You infernal scoundrel you! You vile"—but a sharp ring showed that the man at the other end had cut short the unpleasant trend of the conversation.

Making a tremendous effort at a calm and benevolent hypocrisy the scarlet Deacon turned to Mrs. Fetherell, and murmured tenderly:

"My dear woman, there has been an accident. Your husband is not well, he"—

But Mrs. Fetherell's face was so stern and cold that her lingering tears were as dew upon marble. She dashed them away as if they shamed her, and said in a tone of icy indifference:

"I have heard everything, Mr. Hampton. I understand everything. You cannot deceive me."

"But," interposed the Deacon, on the point of a collapse, "there may be some terrible mistake."

"It is not possible. To make sure, I shall go at once to the hospital."

And refusing the Deacon's proffered attendance she strode out with the high dignity of Juno hearing some new escapade of Jupiter's. Her knight-errant, the messenger boy, followed.

An old friend of Fetherell's had come down from Boston that afternoon and dragged the protesting husband off to dinner at his hotel. Fetherell had gracefully declined wine at the table. He had also refused an invitation to the theatre, giving other reasons than his conscientious scruples against that "vstibule of hell," the play-house. He had left at about 9 o'clock for home, taking a short cut through the wild and western end of —th street.

In his sublime innocence Fetherell had remained ignorant of the real nature of the inhabitants of this section. The place was an inelegant "Tenderloin," a sort of "Rump Steak," you might say. To be seen entering or leaving that street was to submit oneself to very definite imputations. This the guileless Fetherell knew nothing of. He fared the moral jungle like a virgin knight, a Sir Galahad.

As he passed an apartment house, whose front door stood most hospitably open, the scream of a woman in terror made icicles of his veins. The other inhabitants of the house were too much inured to the screams of women under the spell of drunkenness or delirium tremens, or under the heel of irate lovers, to pay particular attention to this particular outburst. But for good John Fetherell only one course was possible—rescue. He ran lightly up the deserted stairway and, finding the door unlocked, enetered the room whence the shrieks rang forth. The sight he saw there threw him back against the door and closed it.

He was in the lair of Maggie Hicks, a girl whose beauty and recklessness had made her name a proverb about town. She was unwontedly alone in her room and she had sat on her bed reading a yellow novel. In her ecstatic attention to the triumph of the heroine's purity over the villain's wiles, she had allowed her forty-fifth cigarette to go out. In relighting it hastily, at a lamp on the table, at her side, she had tipped the frail pharos over into her lap. Her light wrapper and her bed were immdiately one blaze.

She leaped from her pyre with a wild shriek and ran up and down the room in a vain panic, like a high-bred, fire-maddened mare. Her motion fanned the blazes to greater fury, and John Fetherell's eyes beheld a serpentine dance of real flames, that out-Loied Loie's fiercest blazes of drapery.

When the tormented girl saw Fetherell she rushed upon him, imploring aid. He whipped off his heavy woolen coat to wrap about her, but she flung her arms around him in a frenzy of torture, and he dropped the coat. He could not tear himself away. As he gasped in furious struggle, his panting lungs took deep draughts of flame. One mad cry had escaped him, and the terror in this, a man's voice, had at last brought aid.

But the people that poured into the room could hardly save their own nomes by putting out the spreading flames. The rugs they threw upon Maggie and her unknown companion covered only two hideous logs of flesh. The two souls were loosed smoke upon the air.

No one had heard Fetnerell go up the stairway. Maggie was never intentionally alone. Viola tout! The story the people gave police and ambulance surgeons was not marred with any doubts. Out of formality the bodies were taken to the hospital, but the souls were beyound recapture. The letters found in the discarded coat gave the name and business address of an obscure citizen. Two more calamities for Venus's sake. Voila tout!

* * * *

The evidence Mrs. Fetherell found at the hospital —letters, a ring, a watch—removed the last jot of doubt from her outraged heart. She feared that a sight of the dead man might cause a weed of pity to spring up in her perfect contempt for the trickster that had been her husband. She found in his watch a picture of him and of her, loving cheek to cheek. She tore it across with a gasp of disgust. Every word he had ever spoken, every protestation of complete fidelity, every appearance of devotion—all the fair ways and deeds that had endeared him now took on a look of cunning duplicity, and became to her heart only the Dead Sea fruit of hypocrisy. She dashed her handkerchief across her lips to efface the memory stains of his kisses, but felt the attempt as vain as Lady Macbeth's much washing of her little white hand.

As Mrs. Fetherell tore out of her heart all trust in mankind and planted eternal cynicism there, Fate held her fat sides for laughter.

As Mrs. Fetherell passed homeward along the street she flung into the gutter something the surgeon had given her just before she left the hospital The young hobo that saw the glint of gold and stopped to pick it up found, to his Bacchantic delight, a pair of gold sleeve links: the design, two joined hearts.—From Town Topics.

How Short the Space.

Frank H. Sweet in The Ram's Horn.

How short the space! How much to do!
How few and brief the days of men!
So much to learn of false and true—
And only three-score years and ten!

So little time to do things well,
So much—so very much to know!
And while we labor in our cell
The years do not forget to go.

So many things that we might learn,
If only time would stay its tide,
And once again our youth return
To keep the shadow from our side.

But, ah! what cannot be cannot,
We'll do the little that we may,
And in some time-ignoring spot
Perhaps find what we lose today.

Making it Simple.—The scholarly looking man with the big eyeglasses had been invited to address the Sunday school, and was making a few remarks concerning the lesson.

"I see the word 'line' occurs here," he said. Will some one give me a definition of 'line'?"

Nobody answered.

"It is very easy," he proceeded, encouragingly, "though you may find it a little perplexing to convey the idea in simple terms. Try again . . . . Well, the ordinary signification of the word is longitudinal extension, but here it denotes a predetermined boundary. I am sure, my young friends, you can remember that".—Chicago Tribune.